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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/660,222	09/10/2003	Gelu Voicu	CAT-12502-1	7704
22888	7590	04/05/2006	EXAMINER	
BEVER HOFFMAN & HARMS, LLP TRI-VALLEY OFFICE 1432 CONCANNON BLVD., BLDG. G LIVERMORE, CA 94550			LAUTURE, JOSEPH J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2819	

DATE MAILED: 04/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

BY

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/660,222	VOICU ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Joseph Lauture	2819	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 December 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 37-122 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 69-77 and 86-122 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 37-43 and 78-82 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 44-68 and 83-85 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 10 September 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 72 recites the limitation "first and second bulk" on line 6. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Objection To Claims

Claim 72 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Claim 72 depends on subsequent claim 75, which in turn depends on previous claim 69.

Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 37-43 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-10 of U.S. Patent No. 7,012,555. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because their limitations are already claimed in the patent.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claim 78 is rejected under 35 U.S.C 102(b) as being anticipated by Eck et al (US 2003/0011464).

Regarding this claim, Eck et al teach in figure (6) a potentiometer circuit comprising: a first reference terminal V_{ss} , and a second reference terminal V_{ss} , and a plurality of impedance devices (402a), (402b) between the first and second reference terminals, and two structures (406a), (406b), each structure comprising a permanently-on switch in parallel with one of the impedance devices.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 79-82 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eck et al (US 2003/0011464) in view of Brunolli et al (US 2001/0038351).

Regarding these claims, Eck et al teach the essential features of the claimed invention as set forth above except for the limitation of the switches bypassing the impedance devices. However, the use of switches to bypass circuit components is well known in the art, as evidenced by Brunolli et al. Brunolli et al teach in figure (3) a digitally switched impedance circuit including a plurality of impedance devices, wherein the switching devices bypass as needed one or more of the impedance devices (Also See figure 4). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Eck et al and Brunolli et al to improve system performance and reliability because that would provide improved linearity and reduced settling times when impedance values are switched (See [0010], lines 5-6).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 44-68 and 83-85 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 69-77 and 86-122 are allowable.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph Lauture, whose telephone number is (571) 272-1805. The examiner can normally be reached Monday to Friday between 9:30 am and 6:00 PM

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rexford Barnie can be reached at (571) 272-7492. The fax number for the organization to which this application is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll free).


REXFORD BARNIE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Joseph Lauture
Art Unit: 2819
Date: 03/31/2006